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TAGS: [PREL](#) [MOPS](#) [ECON](#) [ENRG](#) [IZ](#) [KS](#) [JA](#)
SUBJECT: IRAQI AMBASSADOR DISCUSSES JAPANESE AND KOREAN
ENGAGEMENT IN IRAQ

REF: TOKYO 5514

Classified By: Political Minister Counselor W. Michael Meserve for reasons 1.4(b), (d)

¶1. (C) SUMMARY: Iraqi Ambassador to Japan Dr. Ghanim al-Jumaily is trying to persuade his Ministry of Foreign Affairs to pay more attention to South Korea on both the security and economic fronts, Jumaily told Embassy Tokyo Political Officer October 30 during a readout on his recent visit to Seoul. He believes that Iraq will announce the opening of an Embassy in Seoul by the end of the year. On Japan, Jumaily repeated his earlier refrain (reftel) that steps must be taken to keep Japan actively engaged in Iraq and that the Iraqi and U.S. governments must speak to Japan with a coordinated voice. He reported that Minister of Oil Shahrastani had a positive October 22-24 visit to Tokyo, meeting with Minister of Foreign Affairs Aso and Minister of Economy, Trade, and Industry Amari, as well as with oil industry notables. He believes that given Japanese oil industry setbacks in Iran (Azadegan) and Russia (Sakhalin 2) the time is ripe to get Japan interested in committing to major Iraqi oil projects. END SUMMARY.

SOUTH KOREAN SUPPORT FOR IRAQ

¶2. (C) Iraqi Ambassador to Japan Dr. Ghanim al-Jumaily briefed Embassy Tokyo Political Officer October 30 on his recent visit to Seoul, his most recent impressions of Japanese engagement in Iraq, and the October 22-24 visit to Tokyo by Iraqi Minister of Oil Husayn al-Shahrastani. Ambassador Jumaily explained that he visited Seoul October 14-17 where he met with Vice Foreign Minister Lee Kyu-hyung to discuss South Korea's continued engagement in Iraq. The Iraqis do not have an Embassy in Seoul, and Jumaily is not accredited there even in a non-resident status, but had been authorized to visit by Foreign Minister Zebari late last year and again this trip. Jumaily said he has been trying to persuade Zebari for some time that Seoul is a major partner for Iraq and that more attention needs to be paid to the relationship. It is not enough, he complained, to engage with the Koreans in Baghdad -- there must be continual communications in Seoul as well. Jumaily recounted that the ROK has over 3,000 soldiers in Northern Iraq, they command a Multi-National Division, and they are interested in leading a Provincial Reconstruction Team. In addition, Korean

companies in the oil and construction sectors have long histories dealing with Iraqis, so the basis for a continued commercial and economic relationship also exists. In Jumaily's opinion, there is no wavering in Korea's solid and consistent support for Iraq.

13. (C) While lamenting the lack of an Iraqi Embassy in Seoul, Jumaily said he thought his lobbying of Zebari to open one, or at least to appoint him as a non-resident Ambassador who could oversee a small staff has finally paid off. He has heard the Iraqi Ministry of Foreign Affairs received permission to open a number of new embassies. He believes that Seoul is near the top of the list and is hopeful the opening of a new Embassy there will be announced by the end of the year.

KEEPING JAPAN ENGAGED

14. (C) Highlighting a message he's delivered to Political Officer before (reftel), Jumaily repeated his view that we must actively work to keep Japan engaged in and thinking about Iraq. Following up on Iraqi National Security Advisor Mowaffak al-Rubaie's visit in August, he recently called on newly appointed National Security Advisor Yuriko Koike to suggest the opening of a regular dialogue on Iraqi security issues with the Japanese government. His idea is to keep the Japanese informed of the security situation in Iraq in order to better facilitate their decisions about how to disburse the financial assistance Tokyo has pledged. In addition, he believes there are ways to keep the Japanese involved in the security field even though they have withdrawn their Ground

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Self Defense Forces. For example, he suggested that the Japanese are in a position to provide training, technology, and knowledge on security issues that could be of benefit to the Iraqi Security Forces. Jumaily said his meeting with Koike had apparently raised some eyebrows at MOFA, as he has since received several calls asking him why he's been directly speaking to Koike and what, exactly, does he have in mind.

15. (C) Jumaily emphasized his belief that it is critical for the U.S. and Iraqi governments to speak to the Japanese with a coordinated, unified voice. He is looking forward to Deputy Iraq Coordinator Barbara Stephenson's upcoming visit to Tokyo so he can work with her to formulate the most effective means of keeping the Japanese engaged.

VISIT OF IRAQI OIL MINISTER

16. (C) Jumaily characterized the October 22-24 visit to Tokyo by Iraqi Minister of Oil Shahrastani as very successful. While here, Shahrastani met with Foreign Minister Aso and Minister of Economy, Trade, and Industry Amari, as well as with approximately 20 presidents and chief executive officers of major Japanese oil sector companies. Jumaily said that Japanese oil sector companies are very interested in Iraq and that a group of companies proposed an investment package that included both upstream and downstream projects. His view is that Iraq should focus on getting the Japanese interested in and locked into downstream activities, particularly in developing additional refinery capacity. According to Jumaily, everyone investing in the Iraqi oil sector seems to be interested in upstream oil field development projects, but Iraq lacks the capacity and infrastructure to do anything with oil that is pumped. He blamed this focus on upstream activities to some extent on his own government which he says has no clear vision on how to take advantage of Japanese, and Korean, interest in the oil sector. In his view, now is the time to lock the Japanese into something firm, given Japanese concern about recent negative developments in Iran and

Russia, where their energy ventures in the Azadegan and Sakhalin projects have recently suffered setbacks.

SCHIEFFER